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John Hassam

Boston

AN
ADDRESS
DELIVERED
BEFORE THE FRATERNITY
AT
FALL RIVER VILLAGE, TROY, MASS.
AT THE
CONSECRATION
OF
MOUNT HOPE LODGE,
AND THE
INSTALLATION OF ITS OFFICERS,
SEPT. 1, 1825.

BY PAUL DEAN, G. H. P.

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ADDRESS.

WHY this solemn assembly of the brethren? Why have the doors of this holy place been flung open to-day? Why this attentive audience, and these sacred services of prayer and praise?—This is the birth day of a new society in this place.—Here a New Member is to be solemnly inducted into the family of free and accepted masons; a fraternity of mutual and faithful friends, whose origin is unknown to all but God, whose extent is not bounded even by the civilized world, whose language is universal, and whose objects are the establishment of good will and good fellowship among the charitable and the faithful of every region of the earth. No desire of wealth or hope of gain has brought us together.—We are not here to grace the triumph and swell the fame of a favourite chieftain or successful conqueror, to decide any great question of political interest, nor to hear the discussion of any disputed point in theology or morals; therefore let every sentiment and feeling of selfishness, pride, ambition and prejudice

be banished from this place and from our hearts. Descend from heaven, celestial Spirit, and excite within our hearts the most generous and the kindest feelings of our nature; and let the most lively sympathy in the joy and grief of fellow men have the dominion of our souls.

Without friendship and sympathy who could live? who could pass the confines of infancy, cross the valley of sickness, or sustain the chilling frosts of old age, without a friend to aid and help him? We commence our being in the midst of cries and tears, and close it in pains and groans, in distress and anguish of heart. Who is this misanthrope that proclaims men are naturally the enemies of each other, advocates the felicity of solitude, and scoffs at the delights of friendship! Surely, before he does this, he should shew that we need no support in the tender and defenceless period of infancy, no attention in sickness, and no comfort in the dreariness and decrepitude of age. But let him not, because he has chilled his life's blood by drinking the deadly waters of misanthropy, poison the fountain that yields the purest joys to all hearts but his own; nor because he has embittered all the connexions and pleasures of society, by his vices, let him attempt to sunder the ties that hold all in sweet concord but himself. The principles of society are clearly taught by the works of God. Here nothing is alone. All give and receive support. Nothing lives for itself—nothing moves but to bless something that adjoins it. The sun, bright emblem of Deity, shines not for himself, but to

enlighten, enliven and cheer the world ; and for this he associates his influence in the heavens with the moon and stars, that the night, as well as the day, may share in his light. The rain descends only to enrich the earth and refresh its inhabitants. The flowers bloom, and the breathing winds waft their fragrance to regale the senses of the living. The earth supports the vegetable, and the vegetable supports the animal creation. The winds and the seas join to convey the commerce of the nations to every part of the globe. Every part is here dependent, and each supported by the whole. Mutual dependence among men, proves they were made for society ; and virtuous friendship only can make society truly happy.

The enlightened spirit of masonry well knows, that a *friend* is not only born for adversity, but for every state and condition of man. How are the pleasures and the amusements of life increased and relished by a pleasant company of friends. Dreary and lonely would even home itself be if destitute of friends ; but with them how cheerful, peaceful and happy is the festive board, and the fire side. The labour of the husbandman is greatly lightened by the company of friends, engaged in the same good work, and with the same heart and mind as himself. The manufactory, market place, and exchange, are made pleasant to us by the assemblage of friends we meet there. The temples of science, the halls of justice and of legislation, are illuminated by the cheering countenances of friends. And even the way to the house of God is made cheer-

ful and pleasant by the kind friends that take sweet counsel with us as we walk therein. Yes, even devotion itself is rendered more sacred and interesting by many hearts being touched with the same sentiments and engaged in the same offering of love and gratitude ; and the songs of Zion, yea, the anthems of glory, will be the more enrapturing for being chaunted by the multitude of the redeemed. But most of all is adversity blessed by the good offices of a friend. A thousand favours rest on the friendly arm that supports a falling brother, and protects the widow and orphan, ministering to them the comforts of life.—Would you know how to prize a friend, go ask the Brother over whose bedside, when visited by disease, his friend has constantly bent, in watchful and kind solicitude till his recovery ; ask the wounded man who fell on the field of blood, but whose friend came and bound up his wounds and carried him to his home ; ask him who, when he was surrounded by assassins and murderers, was delivered and saved by the timely word and sign of a friend. They will tell you, that of all objects they ever saw, a friend is most delightful and lovely, and that his price is far above rubies.

Therefore, to make men thus friendly to each other is the grand design of the masonic institution ; for we are assured, that the human race are formed and designed for society, and that society, whatever be its prosperity, strength, wealth, or refinement, cannot be happy if not bound together by true benevolence and friendship.

We may now consider the influence of enlightened friendship on ourselves and others ; and first, on ourselves. Friendship sweetens the disposition, softens the heart, and makes the mind cheerful. It checks the angry passions, and moulds us to the disposition of doing good. It moves us to delight in another's happiness, and to share in others' woe. It prompts us kindly to admonish each other of errors, and to warn of the approach of danger ; to help in the day of adversity, never leaving or forsaking our brethren in affliction. It opens and liberalizes the mind and heart, and thus prepares men for the services of our benevolent and holy religion. It fits us for extensive usefulness among men, and gives the true dignity and loveliness for which our natures were made.

Its examples are like the sun, in their influence on the world around us. They spread light and cheerfulness, and beget their own loveliness in those who habitually see them. Try it ; you cannot live long in a family, all of whom are mild and friendly to each other, without becoming so yourself. The fruits and good deeds of this principle beget not only respect, but gratitude, and even admiration. Had we the power to make every ruler and prince the friend of his people, we could soon banish despotism and tyranny from the earth, and leave the world in the delightful possession of liberty and freedom. Could we touch the heart of every minister of Christ with true masonic and Christian friendship, we could speedily make an end of persecution, that vilest of enemies to the human race, and let every man

sit quietly under his own vine and fig tree, with none to make him afraid. Could we make every husband, father, brother, master and servant, true friends, we should at once convert the whole earth into a paradise of God.—But do I hear it whispered, this can never be done. I answer, let us not be discouraged because the work is great. Who that never saw a northern winter, were he to behold it, would believe that the sun, and the gentle winds of the south, would in a few months change it to perfect summer? Let us, therefore, try what association and friendship can do. Much has been effected, and much more can be done. We have been persecuted, proscribed, anathematized—we have been objected to, as secret, exclusive, inimical to religion, and to domestic happiness. But the arm of oppression is much shortened, the anathema falls harmless, and the objector has ceased to urge his case with much hope of success. The world have already admitted, that to do good and to pray in secret are no crimes; and our female friends are sufficiently enlightened to know and feel, that they are no more injured by not being admitted to a participation in masonry, than because they are not admitted into our legislatures and armies. Let us then persevere; if we would gain friends we must show ourselves friendly—friendly to each other, to religion, to liberty, to arts and sciences, to morality, to domestic happiness, and to universal prosperity among men; then we shall gain, and justly gain, the good opinion of the world, and see our society triumphantly spread itself from the rising of the sun to its going down.—For this

grand object let us form lodges, and let all lodges be as one lodge, and we shall have no occasion of fear or despondency.

How has man maintained the dominion given him by his Creator over the animal creation, the earth and the sea? Acting singly he could have done but very little towards it. How has he subdued the forests and navigated the ocean? How has he reared cities and established governments? To all these we answer—by association. How did Christ commence the erection of his kingdom in the earth in spite of kings and princes? Answer, he well knew what a few heads, hearts and hands could accomplish, when perfectly united, and therefore chose the twelve apostles. And how did the apostles overcome the world, and plant successfully in the midst of it the standard of the cross? Again we say, by union of heart and effort. How did the three first grand masters at Jerusalem, only three, spread freemasonry from thence through every nation of the earth, and preserve it to be what it now is? To this also we answer—by association. Now if three only could, by joining their hearts and hands in the good work, spread masonry to its present extent and glory, surely, if all masons now scattered over the earth were to be heartily united in its advancement, it would, and that very soon, become universal; and such would be its popularity that should there remain a few scattered enemies, even they would seek to be unknown, and to pass for its friends. Friendship, founded on virtue and sanctioned by piety, is the strength of

all societies, but especially of masonry. Masonry has no power to compel any to join her, nor to remain after they have joined. No, she is not even allowed to invite any one to join her fraternity ; but she is no respecter of persons among those who apply for admission ; she regards not to what nation her applicant belongs, to what form of religion or government he adheres. If he has an attentive ear, a silent tongue, and a faithful, open and charitable heart, she hails him as worthy, and opens to him all her treasures, and stretches out to him her friendly hand of acceptance. She exerts no other influence over men but the influence of truth and goodness. She cares not to rule, but only to bless the innocent and the faithful. Her only object is to do good, and to engage others in the exchange of kind offices, and in the mutual exercise of good will ; and thus unite them in that happy fraternity called a lodge, which is most happily calculated to perpetuate and perfect every good sentiment and feeling of the heart.

The Lodge is the epitome of the universe, overseen and guarded by the Deity—the Flooring represents the checkered scenes of this life—the Clouded Canopy and Starry Firmament, the glorious world of spirits—the Ladder, the faith, hope and charity by which we ascend to it—the Bee Hive, the Sword piercing the Heart, the Mouldering Column and Urn, the Scythe, Grave, Anchor and Ark, are impressive symbols to a mason's heart, and will not fail to render his friendship solemn, fervent and active.

Nor is it the province of masonry alone to make men useful ; it also confers on its members distinguished honours ; and when we contemplate those rewards, we say from the heart—let the miser seek his wealth, the conqueror his laurels of honour, and the ambitious sigh for universal empire and dominion ; but be it ours to seek the ever fresh honours of masonry, which are those of being acknowledged and esteemed a true *friend*. Yes, brethren, as you pass, let the youth point you out as their *friends*, and the aged rise up before you for the respect they feel for you. Let the brother in distress own and hail you his friend, and his widow and her fatherless ones bless, heartily bless you as such. Let the stranger and the good man say of you, he is my friend. Your brother, the father of his country, sought no higher honour amid the perils of war, and the elevations of office, than to be hailed and adored as her chief *friend* ; and sure I am that that distinguished man, who passed his youthful days with him, in the hazards of a most eventful revolution, and on the blood stained field of victory, has been more gratified by the hearty *welcome* of millions, as their friend and the friend of man, than he would have been with the crown, the mitre, and the sceptre of the world. Though Abraham was, and is honoured as the father of the faithful, and a prince among the kings of the earth, yet it was his glory to be the friend of God, and of his people. And if there shall be one gem in the starry crown worn in heaven by Jesus of Nazareth, it will surely be this, that he was the sinner's friend.

As members of the fraternity, therefore, let it be the very height of our desire that by the practice of every virtue, the discharge of every friendly and kind office among men, and by a most faithful imitation of those bright and illustrious examples of masonic and Christian excellence, we may finally gain admission into the assembly of the perfect and the good, who shall be blessed and crowned in heaven as the tried and faithful friends of God and of man.

TO THE GRAND LODGE, we tender on this interesting masonic occasion the most respectful and affectionate felicitations, on the accession of a new Lodge to their jurisdiction and care, in the midst of a flourishing village, and attended by many circumstances of *hope* that it will be as *Mount Zion*, a city not to be moved, but abound with the merchandise of wisdom and truth. Well do I know the deep interest you have ever felt in the prosperity and glory of the fraternity; the unwearyed efforts you have made to advance the happiness, and perpetuate the peace and union of subordinate lodges; and the unfeigned pleasure you have derived from the gradually increasing influence of genuine freemasonry, in giving light to them that were in darkness, relief to the distressed, and comfort to the afflicted and the stranger. This day, therefore, must bring to your hearts a very pure and elevated satisfaction. May you have the peculiar pleasure of seeing all masons walking worthy of their high vocation, the lodges increasing in wisdom and number, and dwelling together in peace and love.

THE FRATERNITY, assembled to witness the solemnities of this day, having reciprocal feelings with us, are congratulated, not only on the interests of the day and the occasion, but on the enlightened state of society, the freedom of political institutions, and the genuine spirit of Christianity, which in this country afford to freemasonry so peaceful, safe and happy a home, and give it the opportunity of appearing, what in reality it is, the friend of pure religion, good order, good government, and of human happiness over the whole globe. Think, my brethren, of what has been done, and of what still remains to be done ; and remember that much is given you, and of you much will be required.

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY, who have been so liberal and friendly as to offer us their house of worship for these services, will accept the assurance of the high estimation in which we hold this proof of their good feelings to the fraternity, and also of the gratitude with which we shall long remember the pleasures of this day, increased as they have been by their liberality. My friends, may union and prosperity ever attend your society on earth ; and when the faithful shall assemble upon Mount Zion, and go into the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, may you also appear with them clothed in white robes, and accepted of the Lord.

TO THE CONGREGATION, I ask leave to remark, that no doubt they will hear and see many things which

they will not be able to understand ; but I avail myself of this opportunity to say that whatever appears singular in our dress, badges, or ceremonies, is designed to commemorate something useful and important in antiquity, or to impress more strongly the impression of some moral sentiment. But in this respect we are not singular ; governments and churches have their ceremonies which are peculiar to themselves. Hence the practice of laying hands on the head of the candidate for the pastoral office, is only to commemorate the manner in which holy and inspired men imparted gifts and authority by the laying on of hands. With this single remark, we offer you our thanks for your respectful attendance on these services, and also our earnest wishes for your individual and social peace and happiness.

THE EXCELLENT BAND AND CHOIR, who have by their performances added so much to the interest and pleasure of these services, will accept our thanks and congratulations. My young friends, God has blessed you with gifts which he has denied to many. Employ those pleasing and distinguished talents Heaven has lent you, to the glory of your blessed Creator, and in the praise of friendship, virtue and goodness on earth.—Sing here below the rising glories of the Redeemer's kingdom, that on richer harps, and with immortal voices, you may swell in heaven the anthem of unceasing praise to God and the Lamb.

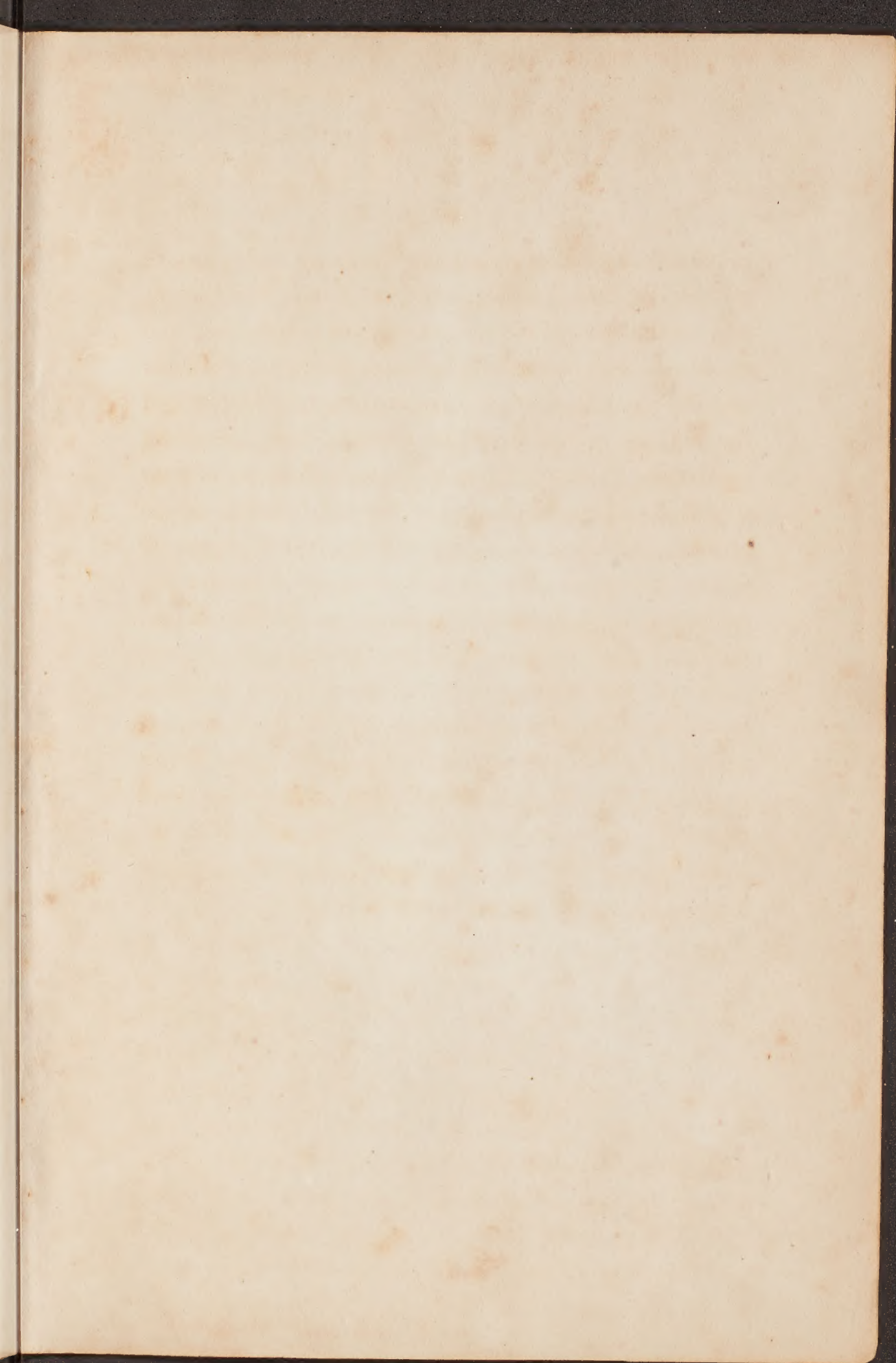
TO THE NEW CHAPTER, AFTER ITS CONSECRATION
AND THE INSTALLATION OF ITS OFFICERS.

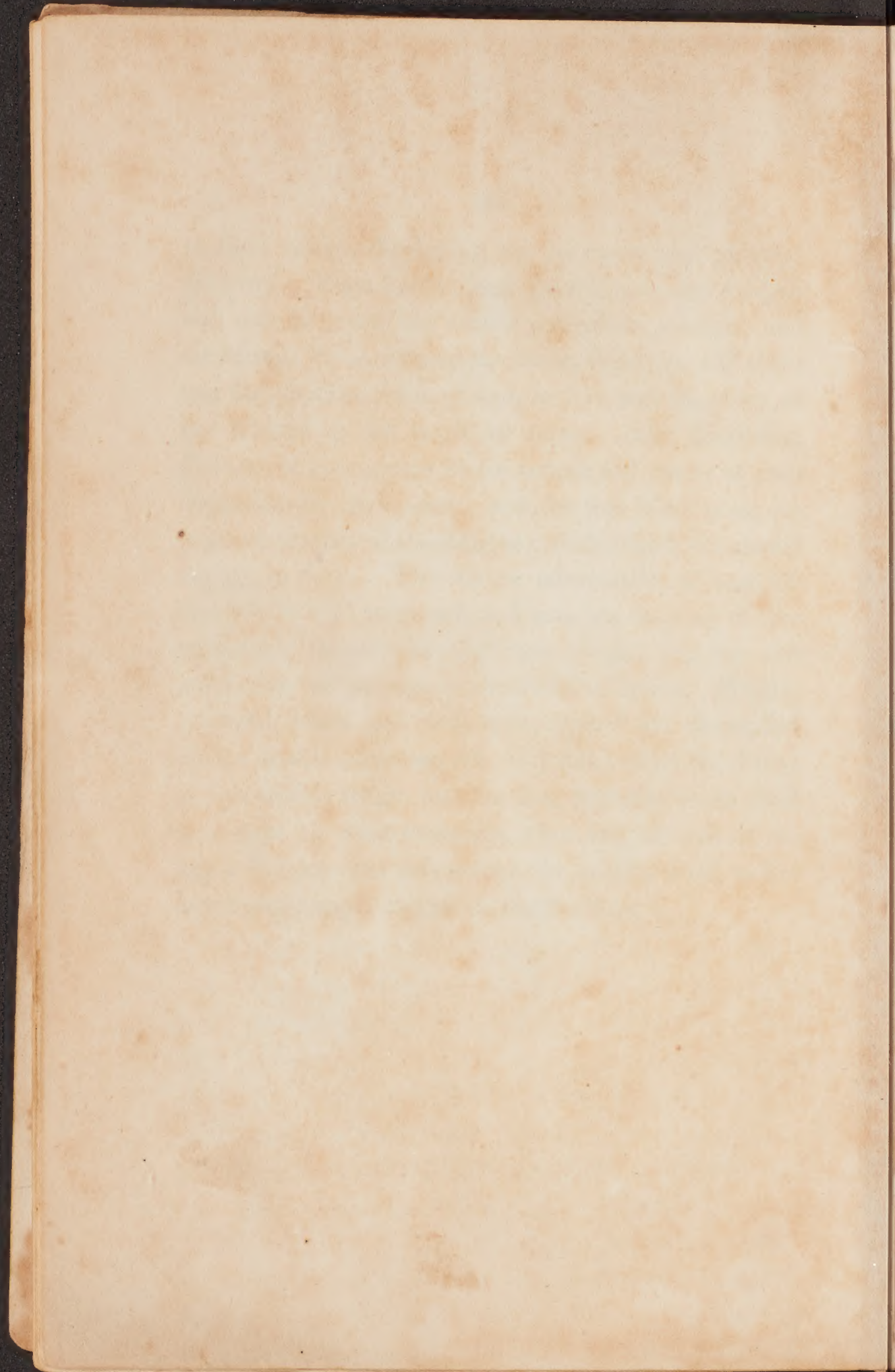
Right Worshipful and Worshipful Brethren,

You have now been solemnly constituted a regular Lodge, and your officers duly installed and invested for their several stations and duties. You are henceforth, for your order, strength, and conspicuous standing, to be as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid.—This day you are to enter upon your respective duties, and to commence, under very favourable circumstances, your course of masonic labours and prosperity; and we pray that you may be the *Mount* where the Lord commands his blessing forevermore. You are thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work, and in the midst of your sister lodges, may you long appear as a star of the first magnitude, shedding a light and lustre on the society to which you have been admitted. Your first care and duty will be to preserve union and harmony among yourselves; then, though your present number be not great, yet by the advantages of association and the blessing of God, the small one shall become a great people.

Your government is the sway of wisdom and benevolence, and from the master to the door keeper, all who act well their parts are equally honourable and entitled to friendship. May the influence of your master in the midst of you be as the influence of the sun, diffusing light and cheerfulness, and you revolve around him in the performance of your several duties, as the planets

in their orbits, displaying the harmony and glory of masonry. Your Lodge, and your Jewels and Badges will remind you of the virtues you are to practise ; and the Mosaic Pavement and the Starry Heavens, will show you the checkered life of man in this, and the glory of the faithful in the world to come. The Ascending Column of Incense marks the ardour and purity of your friendship for each other ; and the Bee Hive is an expressive symbol of the diligence with which we should engage in duty. The Grave admonishes us that life and labour will soon end, and man go the way of the earth from whence he shall not return ; and the *Ark* points out our passage to the world of spirits. Finally, brethren, when you shall have passed the diversified scenes of this uncertain life, and finished all the duties in this earthly lodge, and the dark waves of death shall pass over all your prospects, then may the ark of religion convey you safe across the mighty flood to the house and temple eternal in the heavens.





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